WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY - Founded December 17, 1857 APRIL 1990

WASHTENAW IMPRESSIONS

PRESIDENT'S CORNER:
HOUSE MOVE AWAITS DNR OKAY, LIFTING OF FROST LAWS

When will we move the house from 1015 Wall Street to Main Street? The answer is "Soon, I hope!" Right now we are waiting for two things to happen.

We are waiting for a response from the Department of Natural Resources to the final report submitted by the city on the clean-up of the contaminated soil at our site. Assuming that the DNR agrees that the city has done an adequate job in removing the underground tanks and associated polluted soil, we will be waiting for the frost laws to go off.

(During periods of alternating freezing and thawing, local governments prohibit heavy equipment from traveling on the streets, to minimize pavement damage.) When these two conditions are satisfied, we should be in a position to proceed.

Plans call for digging to undisturbed material in the area where the house will be located. (As I mentioned here previously, because the material used to refill the hole after the city removed the contaminated soil was not compacted, we needed to deal with some special foundation problems.)

It has been determined that the cheapest way to solve the problem is not to use piles but to re-excavate to good material, refill with compacted fill to the level of the basement, and then proceed to construct the house's foundation in the conventional manner.

Once this is done the house could be moved over the foundation. The basement walls would then be built underneath the house.

This scheme has the advantage of allowing us to move the house at the soonest possible moment. We would not have to wait for the basement to be completed. Constructing the basement walls to match the house will give the best result, since the house will not be perfectly square.

When will we move the house? "Soon, I hope!"

Karen O'Neal
665-2242

CENTENNIAL FARM TOUR SCHEDULED JUNE 9

The annual WCHS bus tour Saturday, June 9, will visit some centennial farms in Washtenaw County and feature luncheon at St. Andrew's United Church of Christ in Dexter.

Centennial farms are those recognized by the state as having been owned by the same family for 100 years or more. Some in the county have been in the same family 150 years.

SCRAPBOOK GIVEN

A scrapbook on the "History of the Huron Hills Lapidary and Mineral Society" has been presented to WCHS by their historian, Maretha Larsen along with several books of minutes.

The society was organizaed May 19, 1959, in the home of Stephen Chick, adult education instructor in lapidary at Tappan Junior High. Herbert Cornish was first president.

HOW TO JOIN WCHS

Send name, address and phone number with check or money order payable to Washtenaw County Historical Society to: WCHS Membership, 312 South Division Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104-2204. Information: 996-3008.

Annual dues are $10, individual; $18 a couple. Senior individual (60) $8, senior couple $14. Sustaining dues are $50, commerical, $25, and student, $5. Only one of a couple need be 60 to qualify as seniors.

PROFESSOR H.M. MORTON WILL GIVE SLIDE TALK ON NICHOLS ARBORETUM

A lot of Ann Arbor runners, walkers, bird watchers, nature and flower lovers think the U-M's Nichols Arboretum is a special place.

Professor Harrison L. Morton, director, will give a slide talk on "Managing Nichols Arboretum for Historical Integrity" at the WCHS meeting at 2 p.m. Sunday, April 22, at Bentley Library, 1150 Beal, North Campus.

The new associate dean of the U-M School of Natural Resources (SNR), is professor of forest pathology and urban forestry. He joined the SNR faculty in 1966 after earning his Ph.D. from University of Minnesota.

He has directed the Arboretum since 1987. He is a member of the Ann Arbor Big Tree Committee and formerly served on the steering committee of the Dean Fund, a $2 million endowment for Ann Arbor's urban forestry program.

The meeting is open to the public free of charge. Free Sunday parking across street. Refreshments will be served.

'MR. BONES' WILL PLAY AT ANNUAL WCHS MEETING

Percy Danforth, Ann Arbor's "Mr. Bones," will entertain at the Washtenaw County Historical Society annual meeting at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 16, at Dixboro Church hall.

The meeting will begin with a potluck supper, followed by election of officers and a musical performance by Danforth on the folk instruments called "bones."

HOW SWEET IT IS!

SUTHERLANDS TAP INTO MAPLE SYRUP FOR FUN

Most of us enjoy a sweet taste on the front of our tongues and mankind searched for centuries for ways to satisfy it, Professor Roger Sutherland said in introducing his talk on maple syrup making at the March WCHS meeting.

Professor Sutherland, who will retire this spring from Schoolcraft College, has, with his family, made syrup as a hobby for the past 23 years at his home on Warren Road near Dixboro.

WCHS Vice-president Lawrence Ziegler, who produced syrup commercially in Salem township and sold it on the Ann Arbor Farmer's Market from 1956-1970, exhibited printed materials and equipment including old spiles and a wooden sap bucket made by a Washtenaw county pioneer.

"I had a lot of time to prepare for this talk because, actually, you asked me years ago," Professor Sutherland noted.

The late Professor Leigh Anderson had arranged for WCHS to visit the Sutherlands and have a pancake luncheon at Romanoff's Catering in March 1978, but with the forecast of an ice storm that day it was cancelled.

Professor Sutherland's talk not only focused on maple syrup but also put it into the perspective of that centuries long search for sweetness.

"The search for sweetness has led to rebellions, wars, unjust and unpopular taxes, and has been intimately involved in the slavery movement.

"I'm a beekeeper so I have to put in my little plug for bees--of course, the earliest known source of sweetness was honey gathered from nectar of flowers and produced by honey bees.

"This goes back more than 3,000 years before Christ. Honey and beeswax were very important products. Honey was the main sweetener and was used to make mead, probably the earliest wine.

"Honey was used as an antiseptic, medication, and for embalming the deceased.

"Of course the honeybee simply goes to the flower, extracts nectar, brings it back to the cell, and, actually, they use almost the same process Larry does when he boils down maple syrup--that is, they have a fanning technique or air conditioning in which they move the warm air over the cells and that gradually takes the water out, concentrates it, and when the sugar concentration gets to a precise point, the bees will cap it with wax and then its good forever.

The Sutherlands turned an old basement into a sunken garden and place to boil maple syrup. Roger cuts wood, son Peter (left) totes it to Anne to stoke the fire while Ellen and her mother, Mary, tend to boiling.

"I don't know how long forever is. It will crystallize. Probably one of the problems they had was it's hard to dry honey. Although there are some dehydration processes, there are some difficulties.

"When people think of sugar today, they normally think of sugar made from cane. Cane sugar was first mentioned in China about 800 B.C.

"Sugar cane was probably indigenous to India. When travelers traveled to that part of the world in the very, very early days they brought back word that there was a strange cane that produced honey.

"In fact there was no word 'sugar' at that time--the word for sweetener was 'honey' and so they called it 'honey cane.' At first they simply consumed it by chewing on a piece of cane. I guess kids in that part of the world still do that.

"Later they developed the process of crystallization. It was chopped up, put into large vats and allowed to crystallize. This process was probably developed by the Arabs and Egyptians.

"The first, product from cane was probably a molasses. If they let that ferment, they had that by-product called rum.

"Gradually as they developed the process of refinement, sugar got lighter and lighter in color and today, of course, we have common white table sugar.

"Just to give you some idea of how scarce and expensive it was in earlier days--in 1564 the price of sugar and caviar was the same.

"By the late 17th century, with tea and coffee coming into vogue and the need for sweetening, the demand for sugar rose tremendously.

"Here was a real problem because the sugar cane was grown almost entirely in the tropics or semi-tropics and England mainly had a monopoly on those areas.

"England controlled the sugar of the world and they also controlled the seas and navigation. Many of the other countries had to pay very dearly for sugar.

"You remember during that period we had a political break with England and this served to provide a great stimulus in our country to find new sources of sugar.

He quoted from early historical writings:

"The interruptions suffered by foreign commerce during the American Revolution gave a lively stimulus to domestic ingenuity. To the revolution the United States is indebted for the cultivation of sugar from the maple tree.

"Determined to use so far as possible no production except from their own growth or manufacturing, the inhabitants tried every means of supplying their convenience from their stores."

It was a sort of edict or, at least, a plea from the colonial government of the early 1700s, Sutherland interjected.

"Those who have trees will not neglect the making of maple syrup which is not only the most wholesome and pleasant sweetening, but, being the product of our own country, will ever have the preference of every true American. There ought not to be one pound of foreign sugar brought into the country."

"The plea to 'buy American' is not new," Sutherland noted. The problems with cane led to the development of the sugar beet.

"Not only were the English kind of holding us hostage for sugar, France and Germany were no favorites of England, so they were trying to develop the sugar beet and Russia was too. The reason was they could grow the sugar beet in a temperate climate where it was cool. Sugar beets are very important in Michigan.

"At first the sugar beet was very poor in quality. Gradually it was developed into a fairly high sugar yield item. Today at least 40 percent of the table sugar that we buy comes from the sugar beet.

"The Germans and French were probably the first ones to develop it but many countries got into the act.

"The English resented development of the sugar beet. The Duke of Wellington supposedly ordered all the sugar beet factories in France to be destroyed. I'm not sure if he was successful.

"I didn't touch on the slavery movement but it was certainly very involved in this search for sweetness.

"As an aside, there are other ways of making sugar. In the tropics there are more than 2,000 different palm trees. Nine of these are used for making sugar and still are today.

"The sugar content of palm sap is much higher than maple sap and they can collect for something like five months a year. So in some countries the boiling down or concentrating of palm sugar is important.

"In Java alone, in one recent year they were reported to have produced 25,000 tons of sugar from palm trees.

"Now, let's get back to maple syrup.

"I think every person who enjoys the arrival of spring has their own favorite harbingers. It may be hepatica beginning to come up in wooded areas, it could be the robin.

"For those who make maple syrup, we have an even earlier harbinger. For us its the return of the bright sunny day, accompanied by freezing nights in late winter which signals the time for the renewal of one of the oldest early spring rituals practiced in the northern United States--the conversion of maple sap into syrup.

"We started this as a family project. We found out very quickly that maple syrup production was a fascinating educational activity, involving a broad spectrum of skills, from selecting and tapping trees to the final grading and consumption of the finished syrup.

"We've had a lot of fun over the years. In fact, I got my grandsons involved a little this year.

"Equally interesting has been the study of the lore of sugaring. Historically, maple sugar is one of the oldest forest products in Michigan and the U.S.

EUROPEANS HAD REAL HONEYMOONS

Mead, probably the earliest wine, was made from honey, Professor Sutherland said.

"Somebody probably doctored their honey a little bit and put too much water in it. It fermented and they thought why throw it away. They had made their first mead.

"One of the common terms we use today comes from that wine. It was common practice at weddings to have a mead or honey wine. It also was a custom in Europe to give enough wine to the young bride and groom to last until the next full moon-- that period was then designated as the 'honeymoon.'

"When my oldest daughter was married I thought maybe I'd make enough mead. Then I thought I want her marriage to last forever and that would be way too much wine to make."

"The American Indian is generally given credit for discovering the conversion of maple sap into syrup. There is a little controversy over that but I think it is pretty well documented that they did develop the technique first.

"Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, writing in 1884, described the spring ritual of sugar making as a sort of Indian carnival, a season of hilarity and feasting.

"Michigan Indians apparently used hollowed out logs and made the sap boil by throwing in red hot stones. They obviously couldn't burn that wooden log.

"Another report says some of the Indians partially concentrated their sap by allowing it to freeze overnight and throwing off the ice.

"Larry will tell you later about a reverse osmosis process that accomplishes something of the same thing by concentrating it first before boiling.

"Indians used the sap of walnuts hickory, box elder, butter nut, birch sycamore and basswood as well as maple.

"The roughest and crudest way which they were known to have tapped the trees was to break off the ends of the limbs and let the sap from the wounded branch drip into a trough or vessel.

"They would also slash deep gashes in a tree with their tomahawks and set some container under to catch the sap. Since trees were plentiful and seemingly endless in extent, little trouble was taken to spare them.

"Apparently salt was very difficult to come by for the Indians, I've been told. So they had a preference for sugar as a flavoring.

"The Objiba Indians, who numbered less than 1,500 had one spring made almost 90 tons of sugar. When it is taken into consideration that nearly all the sugar was consumed by the Indians themselves, it shows an almost abnormal fondness for sweets.

"It virtually formed a substitute for salt. Apparently other Indians followed the same practice.

"Early settlers in Michigan and the entire northeast and midwest, after learning the technique of sugar making from the Indians, provided many innovations.

"They found, of course, that boring holes with a drill and inserting spiles--and Larry has quite a collection of spiles over there--instead of gashing the trees as the Indians had done was much less wasteful.

"The backwoodsman in the early days had to, by necessity, be his own woodsman, sawyer, mason, builder, blacksmith, butcher, weaver, tailor, farmer. Yet there was another craft that they had to learn--that of sugar maker.

"In addition to farming, many settlers had to rely heavily on the woodlot

that was at the back of many of their farms. It served as a source of wood for their fire, game for the table, maple syrup for their sweetening and perhaps, simply, a place to walk and enjoy the wildflowers in the spring.

"Many, of course, made just enough maple syrup to supply their own needs.

"Sugaring was a form of farmwork quite unlike many of the other tasks of early days. Though it was exhausting labor, it was, nonetheless, a tiny celebration, not perhaps of spring's arrival but of winter's final departure.

"Boiling shacks or shelters were probably very few in the earliest days, and, at best, only calculated to turn away the rain. In fact, some of the boiling was probably done far from home and the sugar makers camped out in the deep woods until sap season was over.

"To brighten this picture, let's let John Burroughs (the American author and naturalist) tell of his pleasure in boiling sap," Helen and Scott Nearing write in *The Maple Sugar Book*:

"Many a farmer sits up all night boiling his sap when the run has been an extra good one, and a lonely vigil he has of it among the silent trees and beside his wild hearth.

"If he has a sap house he may make himself fairly comfortable and, if a companion, he may have a good time or a glorious wake."

"With the sugar house night boiling is not so bad as it might seem," W.T. Chamberlain wrote in 1870.

"A bunk would be built into one corner of the sugar house three feet high with a straw bed and pillows and buffalo robe or blankets. Two men divided the evening, one boiling while the other one slept, and you will sleep soundly after gathering 30 barrels of sap."

"Locally, in Washtenaw County, there apparently was a fair amount of maple sugaring. I've been told that the biggest concentration was in the northeast part of the county because much of the rest of the county, other than spots here and there, was oak-hickory forest.

"This was done mostly by individual farmers, producing enough for their own needs. Some, in better locations, probably produced enough for commercial operations.

"I want to tell you a little bit about some of the local maple syrup operations I've been told about, mostly in Salem township.

He showed the Joy Road farm previously owned by the Bolgos family, now owned by the Dunn-DeForest family. The sugar bush was north of the house at the back of the farm.

SWEET STORY: WOKSIS DISCOVERS MAPLE SYRUP

"There is an Indian legend about how Woksis, an early Indian chief, learned about the art of making maple syrup. Woksis first tasted maple syrup because he had an ingenious wife.

"Woksis was going hunting one day early in March and he yanked his tomahawk from the tree where he had hurled it the night before and went off hunting for the day.

"The weather turned warm that day and the gash on the maple tree dripped sap into a vessel that happened to stand close to the trunk.

"Woksis's squaw needed water in which to boil their dinner. She saw the trough full of sap and thought it would save her a trip to the stream. Also she didn't like to waste anything.

"She tasted it. It tasted fairly good, a little sweet, so she used it for her cooking water that day. Woksis, when he came home from hunting, scented the maple aroma form afar and knew that something especially good was stewing that evening.

"The water had boiled down to a syrup which sweetened the meal and, so, legend says the happy cutom was inaugurated. Whether it happened or not, it's a nice little story," Professor Sutherland said.

According to Zina Bolgos, his family operated the sugar bush there until they moved in 1914 to Plymouth Road west of the present US-23 intersection, Sutherland said.

Bolgoses had a dairy on Plymouth Road and operated a sugar bush there until 1968. They sold syrup in their dairy store.

"Zina told me someone from the University of Michigan made a movie of their sugar bush operation once but we weren't able to find it."

He showed Bolgos standing at the entrance to Sugar Bush Park, a small remaining portion of the wooded area that was their sugar bush. Its between Orchard Hill and Chapel Hill subdivisions, north of Plymouth Road.

There was a sugar shack in there and for a short period there was a plan to have a community sugar bush there. Unfortunately, vandals got to it within a couple of weeks and split the metal pans open with axes. It never materialized.

He showed a picture of the Brinkman farm on Tower Road in Salem township which had a sugar bush adjacent to the original Bolgos sugar bush on Joy Road.

This farm was taken up from the government by Luther Graham in 1831. It was later purchased by Henry Brinkman, grandfather of the editor, in 1879.

The Brinkman family operated the sugar bush commercially for a number of years into the late 1920s. Henry Brinkman sold syrup to various customers including Chubb's and Freeman'[s student boardinghouses in Ann Arbor for $1 a gallon. The going price this year is $28-$30 a gallon or more.

In 1956, the editor's brother, Burton Brinkman, and Merritt Roarbacher of Plymouth, a former neighbor who remembered visiting the sugar bush in earlier years, made syrup. The next year, Ziegler took over with Rorabacher and for about 15 years made and sold syrup on the Ann Arbor Farmer's Market under the Brinkman Sugar Bush label.

"I know we visited there in the late '60s and that was probably one of the things that stimulated us to go back home and tap our trees," Sutherland said.

"Another sugar bush, maybe the only one remaining in commercial operation in Washtenaw County, is a farm owned by Charlie Cole on Tower Road north of North Territorial in Salem township.

"According to Mrs. Cole whom I talked to yesterday, her father-in-law, William Cole, operated as early as the 1920s. Charlie started operating in 1960 and is still running the sugar bush today.

"Syrup making hit its heyday in the late 1800s and early 1900s and declined after 1918. In 1970 there were 810 farms in 63 counties in Michigan still producing syrup commercially.

"I mentioned before that the Indians tapped many different kinds of trees. The ones that yield the best sap are the sugar maple and another very closely related species, the black maple, both probably yielding a higher concentration of sugar and better quality

of syrup.

"The silver maple and the closely related red maple yield sap of lower sugar content. The red and silver maple both produce buds a lot more quickly in the spring than do the sugar and black.

"As a result there is a chemical change that occurs in the bud--an amino acid develops and that gets into the sap. No matter how much you boil it, you can't get that bitter buddy flavor out. That's about what's happening right now.

"We had such a long period of warmth the buds began to break their dormancy, so even if we get the proper weather now--cold nights and warm days--it probably will not be a good sap season.

"Unfortunately we haven't had good saps seasons in the last couple of years. It's like Murphy's law, if something can go wrong, it will.

"The box elder--most people don't realize that is another maple--is also used by some people. I know there was a man just south of Dixboro who tapped box elders and said it was good but I never had the experience.

"Within the sugar maple species there is quite a wide variation in sugar content ranging from a low of about 2 percent up to maybe 10 or 12 percent.

"Tree genetics, the size of the crown, the height/age of tree, seasonal conditions and general health of tree probably all contribute to this variation.

"They tell me that those people who tapped in January this year--normally that would be a little early-- were probably the smart ones because they probably got a very good run of sap, while those who waited until later probably are not going to get a good yield this year.

"In selecting the maples for tapping, you want to choose a tree with a trunk diameter of at least ten inches at a height of about three feet above the ground.

"We've followed the general rule of one bucket for each ten inch tree and one additional bucket for each six inch increase in diameter. I've seen trees with three, four or five pails on them.

"Generally our problem is not getting enough sap, it's getting enough time to boil down the syrup. I generally just put a couple of buckets on each tree and let it go at that.

"When I came back after visiting the Brinkman operation, I went out and looked at some of our trees and sure enough, there were some old scars.

"It does not seem to harm the tree. I'm sure some trees have been tapped for a 100-150 years without any real loss of vigor.

"If you stand under some of those trees when the sap is flowing sometimes it's almost like rain from broken branches. So the tree is probably not going to lose anymore out of that small hole than it would from broken branches. Not too long ago I saw a lot of icicles up on maple trees.

"We found the quality of sap superior earlier in the year so we tried to tap as soon as we experienced this weather pattern of days that go up to maybe 35-50 degrees, especially if sunny, and drop down to maybe 15-20 at night. The better the spread of temperature, probably the better the syrup.

"The tap is located about three feet above ground and we usually try to put them on the south side. My theory has been that the south side warms up a little faster and perhaps you get a little better run.

"We usually drill a hole with a 7/16 inch diameter drill. We drill two to three inches into the tree on a slight upward angle to facilitate the flow.

"The tree made sugar the previous year and stored it in it he roots. Botanically, what you are doing is putting that hole into the vessels which are conducting sugar water up those tubes. The pressure then is going to push it out the spile. You tap the spile into the hole."

He showed a picture of his young son (now 22) drilling a hole by hand. Larry has an electric drill over there and he had a portable generator or alternator. Of course, he had 1200 taps.

"There are many kinds of spiles, many kinds of buckets. Larry has an old wooden bucket made by pioneer Luther Graham on display.

"When we had kids out, to keep them occupied, I'd usually get some elderberry and sumac stems and have them make spiles by hollowing out a hole in the center. In that case you drive the wooden spile into the hole but you have to have a nail or something to hang the bucket.

"A more modern technique is to use plastic tubing and power drills although I understand the Coles still do it the old-fashioned way. Some people have gone so far as to use a vacuum tube and pull the sap right out of the tree.

"When we started, we used an old wood-burning cookstove. The idea of collecting sap is to boil it down as soon as you can. If you let sap sit around it starts to grow kind of a mold or bacterial growth. It gets cloudy.

"If it's cold or freezes, you can probably hold it for a few days, but the secret is to boil it as fast as you can.

"Another big problem is keeping the debris out. Many use metal covers. My wife made up a piece of plastic and we took an old inner tube and made some rubber bands. That keeps debris out.

"It's amazing the number of red squirrels that run up and down the tree. My honey bees are looking around for sweetness and try to get in the buckets. If you want to get real modern you can put a hole in a one gallon plastic milk jug.

"Sap gathering is not an every day operation. Many times you will go many days with no sap at all. When it is yielding, I found my trees yield one to two gallons a day. You can see the drip coming off. It's not like a faucet. A fast one is drip-drip-drip. With others it's drip...drip...drip.

"The next process is to get the sap from the trees to the boiling place. In the old days they used a horse-drawn gathering tank. Now they use tractors.

"One of the biggest problems of getting sap is the ground is muddy. If the sap is running, it's thawing and muddy. The mud gets into the tractor brakes and ruins them.

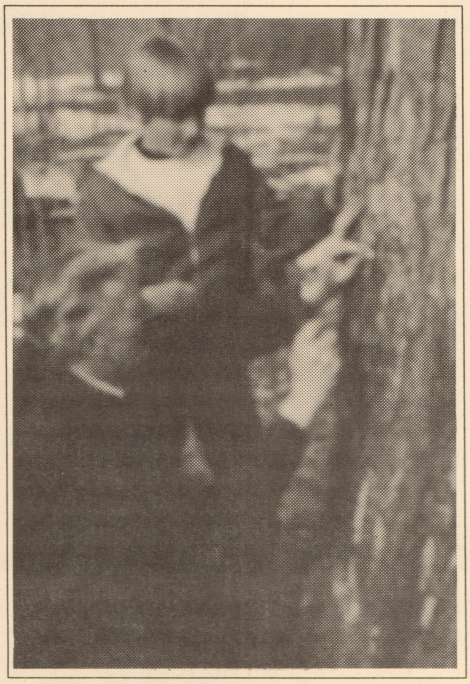
"Some use plastic tubing and gravity feed with tubes connected one to another and into a large tank or some-

FOR ARMCHAIR SUGARING LEASE A MAPLE TREE

An enterprising Massachusetts company offered an unusual Christmas gift and armchair sharing in the "adventure of sugaring" a few years ago in *Yankee Magazine*--lease a sugar maple tree or one sap bucket for a year.

They would send lessees an "authentic 1890 Treasury Department lease," suitable for framing, gift card, progress reports during the syrup season and finally a jug of maple syrup--at least 50 ounces for tree lessees, 25 ounces to bucket "borrowers."

Tree leases were $34, buckets, $24, plus $5 each shipping.



Roger taps spile into maple tree to catch sap. Son Peter (now 22) looks on.

times, on a hill, it runs right down into the sugar shack.

"In our case, we simply made the kids go out...although I have to be truthful with you, the *Ypsilanti Press* photographer came out and the kids posed for this picture.

"Processing is a matter of simply concentrating the sap which is only two to three percent sugar up to about 65 percent sugar by continuous boiling. it takes about 35 or 40 gallons of sap to get a gallon of syrup.

"Again, we have used the technique of throwing out the ice and it concentrates the sap a little bit.

"On the land that we bought the original home had burned down. The basement was the neighborhood dump. We cleaned out all the junk and it was kind of an interesting archeological dig. On top were convenience foods. As you went down you got to more basic commodities.

"We made it into a kind of sunken garden. That's where we boil our sap down.

"The process is simply putting the sap into pans. We have kind of a formula. We fill it up. Then I'm told by my wife to add so many containers as it boils down and then she'll know when it's about ready.

"Sometimes I forget the formula and scorch it. Once you burn it you smell the odor and you have ruined 40 gallons of sap. If Larry did it, it would ruin several hundred gallons. It's the worst feeling in the world--you've put all that work into it and then you lose the whole batch. Then you have all the mess of cleaning up the pans.

"My wife filters it though felt or clean cloth and takes it inside to finish it off and can it.

"Some people have tried to do it in their home totally. That is bad news unless you do just a little bit. I've heard of wallpaper falling off the walls, plus it isn't just pure water. My wife will tell you it's sticky all over.

"It does take an awful lot of wood to do this. We burn a fair amount of wood in our house now and we debate--should we keep ourselves warm or should we do maple syrup.

"Most of ours is used as syrup but you could concentrate it more and let it crystallize into sugar. Larry has some maple leaf molds over there they used to make sugar candy. The Coles make a kind of fudge.

"When our kids were younger we made jack wax. To do that you take maple syrup, bring it to a boil and boil until the temperature is 22 degrees higher than boiling. Get a pan of fresh snow, pour it on the snow and twirl it on a fork or stick. It's like taffy.

"Michigan usually ranks within the top five syrup producers. New York typically is the leading state but Vermont gets all the publicity. An awful lot of 'Vermont' syrup is shipped to Vermont from New York, Michigan and Pennsylvania," Sutherland said.

"A lot of syrup is also shipped into the United States from Ontario and Quebec," Ziegler added.

"In 1989, Michigan produced 82,000 gallons, still ranking it among the top five sugaring states. Michigan State University says there are about 600 commercial syrup producers making anywhere from 25 gallons to 2,000.

One of the biggest is Snow's Sugar Bush near Lansing which normally makes 1,000 gallons. Another in Leelanau County makes 2,000 gallons.

"The last couple of years the yield has been down because of weather. In the east, acid rain is causing maple decline as well as a couple of insects.

"We've had fun doing it. If we happen to be making maple syrup in the next few years on Warren Road, give us a call and you can share in that spring festival.

"It's a unique situation because the only place in the world sugar maples grow naturally is north of the Ohio River and east of the Mississippi River," Ziegler noted.

"That includes about ten New England and north central states, and Quebec and Ontario, Canada.

"I saw a reverse osmosis machine up to Snow's Sugar Bush near Mason the other day. They circulate the maple sap through about nine pipes and when it comes out they have removed about two thirds of the water before they start boiling it.

"They could take more out, but if they do, you don't have a maple flavor. All it is is sweet. You have to have a browning process by cooking.

"Snow's machine cost $14,000. It saves a lot of fuel, but you have to put a lot through it to make it pay.

"The way you know you have maple syrup is to use a hydrometer. You put the syrup into a narrow, deep cylinder-shape container and insert the hydrometer. If it floats at the designated mark the syrup is ready (eleven pounds per gallon).

"After you have had enough experience boiling, you can tell by the bubbles if it's syrup. When they get small, it's nearly ready."

At least two families in the audience had made maple syrup.

Robert Hesse, who grew up on Vorhies Road south of Joy in Superior township, recalled that in the 1930s and '40s his dad used to tap 80-100 trees in their woods east of Vorhies and cook sap in what they used to call a hog kettle.

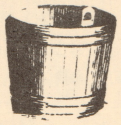
They made it for their own use, especially during World War II when you couldn't get sugar, he said. Ziegler agreed that it's good to tap over a big root or under a big limb.

Herbert and Olive Conant of Napier Road in Salem township produce up to 20 gallons which they finish up in the house. They used to have a small sugar bush on what is now Willow Run Airport. When the airport was built in 1942 they moved their home to its present site where they also have a few maples.

(Their home, a circa 1830 Greek Revival style, has recently been listed on the State Registry of Historic Places.)

Someone asked how long syrup keeps after it's canned. The Conants say they have a quart made by Herb's father over 50 years ago, never opened.

The meeting concluded with dessert of maple syrup poured over ice cream on a small waffle.



ANDREW TEN BROOK:
FORGOTTEN FIGURE IN ANN ARBOR HISTORY

By Russell E. Bidlack

(Editor's Note: This is the fourth and final part of Dean Bidlack's manuscript on one of the U-M's first professors and acting presidents. Previous parts were in the November-December, February and March issues.)

The last letter written by Ten Brook known to exist was preserved quite by accident in the pages of a book donated to the Bentley Library many years ago by Ben Wheeler. We know only that it was addressed to a child; it was not dated.

My dear girl:

Your kind letter charms me more than I can tell you. That you, in the midst of your labors, play, varied company & the endless charms of your surroundings, should think of me in my solitary room here, much as I thought of you & all the family, is more than I could have hoped.

I love children, & when I am with them, I become in thought a child like them, if, indeed, they are of such kind sympathies that they will allow me to do so...

And, in like manner, I try to accommodate myself to company of all ages up to my own & still older, if I can find in them hearts beating like my own.

Now I am a little afraid I am writing what is more fit for older persons than you, & yet you have given me proof that you know how to feel with & for an old man like me. I would like to have you & your little sister for my girls just as much as is proper.

The very animals which occupy so much of your care & amuse you so, as well as the people you speak of, I should greatly enjoy with you, if that were possible. By the way, I have yet those street-car tickets that were left of our ride last summer & when you come back, we can use them for another ride.

Day before yesterday & yesterday I saw your father, as he will doubtless tell you.

Now I have only to tell you that much as I enjoy company, whether of the young or old, I enjoy myself also alone & that, as I am situated has to be my chief enjoyment. That is a lesson that everyone, old & young, should learn.

Please give my love to all your family & to others who may know me. The Lord bless you,

Lovingly,
Andrew Ten Brook

From an obituary appearing in a Baptist publication called the *Baptist Christian Herald*, we know that on November 1, 1899, "though not particularly ill, [but] feeling the need of a recuperative change," Ten Brook, at age 85, took the train to Detroit to enter what was called The Seventh Day Adventist Mission on Trumbull Avenue.

Sometimes called a "sanitarium," this shelter for the aged in poverty, might be called a nursing home today. "Overestimating his strength," but doubtless to save the expense as well, the old man walked from the station "carrying his valise." The writer of the obituary continued:

But the effort was too great for his vitality. He reached his destination only to take to his bed, and sank steadily until the end came.

Andrew Ten Brook died on Sunday afternoon, November 9, 1899. He was buried beside his first wife, Sarah Gilbert, in the family plot in Forest Hill Cemetery.

A simple monument records their names along with those of their six children, including the brief life spans of their five sons. The death date of Mary, their only daughter, has never been added; she died in Brooklyn in 1910.

An obituary in the weekly Ann Arbor *Register* contained the following tribute:

When he was able to get about, Prof. Ten Brook was never idle. For some years back he taught a class in German at the Baptist Sunday School. In this his learning showed to good advantage, as he read the Scriptures in Greek and was a thorough scholar in this line. A book on evidence and the history of Christianity is now in the publisher's hands.

He retained his full intellectual vigor to the last. He was generous to a fault, and largely to this may be attributed the fact of his slender means at his death...There will be many who will cherish the memory of Andrew Ten Brook.

ANDREW TEN BROOK RESIDENCE ON WASHTENAW AVENUE

From 1874 atlas of Washtenaw County. It stood near Trotter House now at 1443 on eleven acres of lawn and trees.

The "history of Christianity" mentioned above was never published, nor has the manuscript survived. Perhaps it was never even sent to a publisher.

Another question remains. Why did Ten Brook's only granddaughter, Isadore Mudge, burn her grandfather's papers? As has been noted, it was Francis L. D. Goodrich (1877-1962), a contemporary and close friend of Miss Mudge, who conveyed this information to the present writer in a hushed tone in 1958.

He also recalled that toward the end of her life, Miss Mudge had expressed regret to him that she had done this. If he knew her reason, he did not reveal it.

A graduate of Cornell University in 1893, Miss Mudge had won such high praise as a scholar and historian while an undergraduate that she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa in her junior year.

It was not to her grandfather, but to George Lincoln Burr, historian, archivist, and librarian, that Isadore Mudge credited her choice of librarianship as a career. She was a student at Melvil Dewey's New York Library School in Albany when her grandfather died in 1899. Whether she accompanied her mother to the funeral is not known.

Following a decade as a library educator at the University of Illinois, Miss Mudge accepted the position of reference librarian at Columbia University in 1911 where she remained until her retirement in 1941.

Through her writings, including successive editions of her *Guide to Reference Books*, long a textbook for all future librarians, Miss Mudge came to be known as "the most influential reference librarian in the history of American librarianship."

Her memory is perpetuated today in the annual award by the American Library Association of the Isadore

Gilbert Mudge Citation.

It is in view of these achievements, and her special interest in American history and archives, that one finds it so difficult to understand why Ten Brook's granddaughter not only destroyed his precious papers but refused to assist in gaining recognition for him in the *Dictionary of American Biography*, a primary tool of reference librarians.

Was it because she simply lacked the space to store his letters, notes of interviews with early Michigan settlers, and his unpublished articles? Did she consider them an unworthy contribution to an historical society?

(The burning took place after 1923 for in that year she complied with a request to borrow Ten Brook's expanded manuscript of his history of Ann Arbor, at which time a copy was made.)

Might Miss Mudge have been concerned that an inherited weakness could account for the early and disturbing deaths of her Ten Brook uncles - a concern best hidden from family members?

Or did she find so unforgivable her grandfather's divorce, including the revelation in the newspapers of the time of his alleged cruelty to her stepgrandmother, that she wished for the memory of his career as well as his papers to be forgotten?

Nephews of Miss Mudge had no knowledge of these events when contacted by this writer a number of years ago.

Isadore Mudge became a semi-invalid in her last years, and she died in a nursing home at the age of 82. In her own lonely and final days, did she, perhaps, sometimes think of her grandfather alone in his "solitary room" in Ann Arbor a half-century earlier?

HISTORIC HAPPENINGS INVOLVE : TENT THEATRE, OLD CHURCH, GOVERNOR, FANS

Chelsea Historical Society: 7:30 p.m. second Monday at Railroad Depot, North Main at tracks.

Dexter Society: 8 p.m. first Thursday at museum, 3443 Inverness.

Manchester Society: 7:30 p.m. third Monday at Blacksmith Shop, 324 East Main. Laura Lynn Rosier of Jackson, granddaughter of the founder, Harold Rosier, will talk abut "The Rosier Players and Old Time Tent Theater," April 16.

Milan Society: 7:30 p.m. third Wednesday at Hack House, 775 County Street.

Pittsfield Society: 2 p.m. first Sunday at Pittsfield Town Hall, State and Ellsworth Roads. History Day 1-5 p.m. Sunday, May 6, probably about the census.

Salem Society: 7:30 p.m. fourth Thursday. April 26 meeting at the 126-year-old Salem-Walker Church at Tower and Angle Roads.

Don Riddering of the Society recently published another in a series of monographs, "Old Families and Historic Houses of Brookville" (also called Lapham's Corners).

Saline Society: 7 p.m. third Wednesday at Senior Center, 7605 North Maple Road. Former Governor John Swainson, now President of the Michigan Historical Commission, will discuss Michigan historical organizations and their challenge in the 90s.

Webster Society: 7:45 p.m. second Monday in member homes.

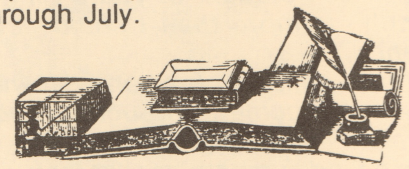
Ypsilanti Society: Museum hours 2-4 p.m. Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. Archives open 9 a.m.-noon weekdays.

Mrs. Grace Cornish was to speak on "200 Years of Fans" at the YHS meeting Sunday, April 8, at the museum. She has a collection of several hundred.

MAYPOLE DANCE SET AT KEMPF HOUSE MAY 6

The magnolia tree planted by Mrs. Reuben Kempf is expected to bloom for the 86th time, hopefully on Sunday, May 6, when the annual Ann Arbor Day party is planned at Kempf House, 312 South Division.

A maypole dance, tea and refreshments are planned. They'll discuss the garden survey of old-time plants and may give away trees and shrubs for planting. Kempf House is open 1-4 p.m. every Saturday and Sunday through July.



WHAT IS IT? GAME OFFERED SCHOOLS, GROUPS

WCHS offers a traveling exhibit of small artifacts set up as a humorous "What is it?" game to schools for children and another for adults.

They are available for classes and meetings subject to volunteer availability. For information call Arlene Schmid 665-8773.

Editor: Alice Ziegler, 663-8826
Address: 537 Riverview Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Mailing: Lucy Kooperman, 668-7174
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